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Message Text

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SECDEF WASHDC
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 4115
USMISSION GENEVA
USDEL MBFR VIENNA
USCINCEUR
USNMR SHAPE
USLOSACLANT
CINCLANT

S E C R E T USNATO 3335

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MCAP, NATO
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM IV -- BRIEFING ON US RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT WITH RESPECT TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS FOR TACTICAL USE, NPG MINISTERIAL, BERGEN, NORWAY, 11-12 JUNE 1974

GENEVA FOR CSCE DEL

BEGIN SUMMARY: BRIEFING SUMMARIZED COSTS AND DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONRY. THREE MODERNIZATION PROGRAMS: EARTH PENETRATORS, ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPONS, AND SUPPRESSED RADIATION WEAPONS SUMMARIZED. SECDEF DENIED EXISTANCE OF MINI-NUKE PROGRAM, POINTING OUT US STRIVING TO MAXIMIZE COMMAND AND CONTROL OVER NUCLEAR WEAPONS. MINISTERS WELCOMED SECDEF REMARKS AND RECOGNIZED THAT THEY PROVIDED THE BASIS FOR A FOLLOW-ON NPG STUDY ON MILITARY AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF
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NEW TECHNOLOGY. END SUMMARY.

1. SECDEF BRIEFING BEGAN WITH OUTLINE OF US EXPENDITURES FOR TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS US NOW

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STRIVING FOR IN NEW WEAPONRY. SECDEF SAID TECHNOLOGY WAS NOW AVAILABLE TO IMPROVE DELIVERY ACCURACY, TAILOR WEAPONS EFFECTS, IMPROVE WEAPONS SAFETY, SECURITY AND CONTROL , AND REDUCE VULNERABILITY. SECDEF STRESSED THAT PROGRESS DEPENDED ON RESOURCES US AND ALLIES CHOSE TO APPLY. EXCEPT FOR PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE ACCURACY, TODAY'S DECISIONS WOULD HAVE LITTLE EFFECT UNTIL 1980'S.

2. SECDEF OUTLINED NEW US PROGRAMS FOR IMPROVING TERMINAL GUIDANCE AND STATED THAT THE OBJECTIVE OF THESE PROGRAMS WAS TO GET THE SAME EFFECT AS OLDER WEAPONS, BUT AT GREATLY REDUCED YIELD AND COLLATERAL DAMAGE. ALLIES MUST UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT THIS OBJECTIVE. SECDEF STRESSED THE EXTREMELY HIGH PAYOFF TO INCREASED ACCURACY.

3. SECDEF THEN SUMMARIZED THREE OTHER US MODERNIZATION PROGRAMS: EARTH PENETRATORS, ENHANCED RADIATION (ER) WEAPONS, AND SUPPRESSED RADIATION WEAPONS. HE DESCRIBED ER WEAPONS AS A SUPPLEMENT TO ADM'S; WEAPONS WHOSE DEVELOPMENT WAS PROMPTED BY THE DISADVANTAGES OF ADM'S.

THERE WAS NO SPECIFIC WEAPONS PROGRAM FOR EARTH PENETRATORS, AND ER WEAPONS COULD NOT BE DEVELOPED BEFORE THE 1980'S.

4. SECDEF STATED THAT ER WEAPONS WERE THE MOST INTERESTING NEW IDEA FOR STUDY BY THE ALLIANCE. A ONE KILOTON ER WEAPON COULD HAVE THE SAME LETHAL EFFECTS AS A STANDARD WEAPON OF MUCH HIGHER YIELD. COLLATERAL DAMAGE WAS LESS. THE EFFECTS COULD BE PRECISELY TAILORED, LONG-TERM RADIATION WAS LIMITED, AND THE SOVIETS IN ALL PRACTICALITY ARE NOT DEVELOPING SUCH WEAPONS. SEDEF FELT THAT BATTLEFIELD USE OF ER
WEAPONS IN SELECTED SITUATIONS COULD FORCE THE SOVIETS TO CALL OFF AN ATTACK. SUPPRESSED RADIATION WEAPONS WERE OF LESS INTEREST BEACUSE OF WEIGHT PENALTIES AND OVER-LARGE YIELDS.

5. SECDEF OUTLINED US PROGRAMS TO INCREASE THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND STATED THAT NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS IN THIS AREA REQUIRED HELP FROM THE ALLIES.

6. SECDEF STATED THAT US HAD NO SUCH PROGRAM AS "MINI-NUKES." THE
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MINI-NUKEE CONCEPT ERODED THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND IMPLIED A GRAY AREA WITH "PEOPLE RUNNING AROUND WITH NUCLEAR HAND GRANADES." THE US WAS STRIVING TO MAXIMIZE COMMAND AND CONTROL OVER NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IT MADE MORE SENSE TO EMPLOY INCREASED ACCURACY, MORE PROMPT LETHAL RADIATION EFFECTS, AND LOWER YIELDS, ALL OF WHICH INCREASE MILITARY EFFECTIVENESS WHILE REDUCING COLLATERAL DAMAGE. THE ABOVE MEASURES ALL ALLOW THE US TO MAINTAIN ITS COMMAND AND CONTROL.

7. SECDEF ADDED THAT THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IN ALLIANCE NUCLEAR PLANNING WAS NOT IN R&D BUT IN THE LACK OF AGREEMENT WITHIN THE ALLIANCE ON AN ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL/MILITARY DOCTRINE FOR THE USE OF TACTICAL NUCLEAR FORCES. SECDEF'S PRESENTATION WAS

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FOLLOWED BY FILM CLIPS ON THE NEW WEAPONS.

8. FRG (LEBER) ASKED ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOVIET ANTI-RADIATION EQUIPMENT IN THEIR ARMORED VEHICLES. SECDEF ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD DEVELOPED AND USED SUCH EQUIPMENT, BUT THAT ITS EFFECTIVENESS WAS OPEN TO QUESTION.

9. ITALY (ANDREOTTI) ASKED IF THE NEW WEAPONRY COULD REPLACE OBSOLESCENT WEAPONS IN NATO'S STOCKPILE. SECDEF REPLIED THAT THE WEAPONS HE HAD DISCUSSED ALL REQUIRED LEAD TIMES OF AT LEAST 3-4 YEARS. MOST COULD NOT BE EMPLOYED UNTIL THE 1980'S. SACEUR ADDED THAT WHILE IMPROVEMENTS WERE WELCOME, IT WAS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE PRESENT STOCKPILE WAS STILL EFFECTIVE AND STILL FULLY EMPLOYABLE TO SERVE NATO GUIDLINES. IMPROVEMENTS SUCH AS THE SUBSTITUTE OF LANCE FOR HONEST JOHN WERE NOW UNDERWAY.

10. NETHERLANDS (VREDELING) PROBED SECDEF'S DISMISSAL OF THE MINI-NUKE CONCEPT. HE ASKED IF THE NEW WEAPONRY NEEDED NEW DELIVERY SYSTEMS OF IF IT COULD BE USED ON, FOR EXAMPLE, LANCE. SECDEF REPOLED THAT MATCHING THE NEW WEAPONS TO DELIVERY SYSTEMS WAS A QUESTION OF FLEXIBILITY AND THAT THERE EXISTED A WHOLE "MENU" OF OPTIONS. SECDEF THEN REPEATED HIS VIEW THAT THE MINI-NUKE CONCEPT WAS MISLEADING; THAT THE US INTENDED TO MAINTAIN COMMAND AND CONTROL OVER ITS NUCLEAR WEAPONS. SECDEF STATED THAT INSOFAR AS THE MINI-NUKE CONCEPT BLURRED THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR WAR, IT REDUCED THE PROBABILITY THAT WE CAN AVOID UNCONTROLLABLE NUCLEAR WAR.

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11. UK (PERMREP PECK) ASKED OF WHAT USE MODERN, CLEAN, ACCURATE WEAPONS WOULD BE IF THE SOVIETS RESPONDED TO THEM WITH OLD, DIRTY, INACCURATE ONES. SECDEF ACKNOWLEDGED THAT UNLESS THE SOVIETS RECOGNIZED THE DESIRABILITY OR RESTRAINT, ALLIANCE RESTRAINT (WHETHER IN TARGETING OR WEAPONRY) WOULD BENEFIT ONLY THE WARSAW PACT. WE MUST HAVE A MECHANISN TO COMPEL OUR OPPONENTS TO ESTABLISH GROUND RULES. IN RESPONSE TO SUGGESTION THAT A STUDY WAS NECESSARY OF THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW WEAPONS, SECDEF REPLIED THAT POLITICAL EFFECTS OF NEW WEAPONS WERE ALL SIMILAR. IF THE ALLIANCE CONVEYS RESTRAINT, WILL THE WARSAW PACT RESPOND IN KIND? THIS IS THE NUB OF THE MATTER, AND IS APPLICABLE TO PRESENT OR NEW WEAPONRY. SYG LUNS COMMENTED THAT AN NPG STUDY IS ALREADY UNDERWAY ON THIS ISSUE.

12. FRG (LEBER) WELCOMED SECDEF REMARKS, BUT CAUTIONED THAT THE DISCUSSION SHOULD NOT PROGRESS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE MINI-NUKE CONCEPT. HE EMPHASIZED THAT TACNUCS WERE NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.

13. NETHERLANDS (VREDELING) AND CANADA (MENZIES) EMPHASIZED NEED FOR NON-TECHNICAL STUDY; ONE THAT CONSIDERED POLITICAL AND DOCTRINAL ISSUES OF THE NEW WEAPONRY.

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14. FRG (LEBER) AND LUNS EXPRESSED THEIR CONCERN ABOUT THE
PHYSICAL SECURITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.
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